Harambee FLAME

VOL. IV No. 3 March 1983

BLACK RADIO IN OMAHA?

At the present time, two separate groups in Omaha are trying to establish a radio station which will be owned by and operated for Afrikan people there. One group, headed by Jack Harris and Larry Littlejohn, is seeking to found a commercial, privately owned station. The other group, under the leadership of Jarvis Garnett, Ellen Reddy, and William Thompson, are working to set up a non-profit, community-access radio station.

Certainly these efforts are welcomed by Omaha's Afrikan population. However, they bring the Afrikan community in Omaha to the gate of an important dilemma: Can the community support two black radio stations? If the probability is that it cannot, should it rally behind the effort to bring into existence the commercial venture or should it opt to push for the establishment of the non-profit enterprise? Of course the question of whether the community can support two stations is a speculative one. An important related question is whether the Federal Communications Commission will approve license applications for two separate stations designed for a community which only comprises about ten percent of Omaha's population.

A key word to be looked at in this dilemma is "serve." Any black radio station should and would certainly claim to serve Omaha's Afrikan population. What we must do is define "serve" and then give or deny support to a yet-to-be-born station on the basis of whether such an entity is structured and designed so that serving the community is the priority. It is not vague promises or lip service that is spoken of here but commitment, as might, for example, be written into license application to the F.C.C.

When we speak of a station serving the community, we must do so with community needs in mind. What can a radio station be reasonably expected to do to meet community needs. (Continued on page 3)

WHY YOU SHOULD COME TO PRISON

The Harambee Afrikan Cultural Organization is made up of Afrikan prisoners in the Nebraska State Penitentiary. Most of these men will return to the communities whence they came--your communities. They will return either as men you will be able to trust or as men you would correctly be very cautious of. It is the objective of H.A.C.O. to so educate our members so that they will re-enter their respective communities, not only as persons who can be trusted, but persons who can be depended upon to work actively for the interests of their communities. You have an interest in how successful we are.

At our weekly meetings and through this newsletter, we attempt to enable our members to develop a new value system, one by which they can see community as family and respect the women, men, and children which comprise it. This is a value system which, while it may be new to our members and too many other American-born Afrikans, is not new at all but is ancient. It was the thread which formed the traditional Afrikan tribal fabric, from a time thousands of years before there was such an entity as European "civilization." There are yet areas in Afrika and in other parts of the world where this value system still thrives but much evidence of it has been erased by materialist greed and competitiveness.

We try earnestly to bring the idea of mutual respect into the souls and minds of our members but cannot do this alone. While several Afrikan people from their respective communities in Omaha and Lincoln have come to our aid in the task of educating and learning from our members, we need aid from many more of you. If you have ideas you'd care to share with us, information you'd like to impart, get in contact with us. H.A.C.O. meets every Monday.

Send inquiries to: Education Chairman
Harambee Afrikan Cultural Or.
P.O. Box 2500
Lincoln, Neb. 68502-0500

WHEREFORE ART THOU, BLACK PRIDE

The following ads were excerpted from three issues of a porno mag. While the ads from Afrikan people made up a fairly small percentage of the total of the ads, they were hardly rare. Much has been said over the past few years about black male/female relationships. The following may say as much.

California: Sexy, black lady, 25, free, willing & able. Wish to meet men. Race means nothing to me, just be for real, as I am. Send $3 for my sexy picture & reply. I am nothing but pure pleasure.

Illinois: Black male, 32, 5'8", 156 lbs., clean, good body, wish to meet or correspond with white females. All sex goes. They must be clean, attractive, intelligent & fun to be with. Send photo. Your pleasure is mine.

Ohio: Single lady, would like to correspond & meet males & couples. Am 27 yrs., 5'3", 112 lbs. Like dancing, music, yoga, plays, posing for a photographer, reading, iceskating & some sports. Come create with me. Sensuous, creativity, love & affection. I am lonely & I am black.

Illinois: Hot, sexy, big prime ass, black girl, wishes to meet men 8" or more. Must be skilled in FR and GR. $3 and SASE for more details and photo.

Pennsylvania: Hot and ready, heavy breasted soul sister, wishes to invite all FR and GR experts to my private pad for a weekend of adult pleasures. Send $5 for details needed to meet. Will send hot photo too.

Alabama: Black male, 5'9", 165 lbs., seeks single, discreet, white, Oriental, female partner for French-fest & loving.

Illinois: Black pussy lover, if you like young, prime hairy pussy, here it is. Have a big ass, as you can see. Real close up view and details. $5 and SASE please.

Kansas: First ad, single black male, 24, well endowed, seeking attrac. females, 18-35, for sexual encounters, travels also accepted. Very clean, safe & straight. No homo's or fatties, also no smokers. Love to give FR & GR. Will answer all. Photos and phone. Race unimportant. Hurry.

FROM OTHER SOURCES

On Zimbabwe The following is excerpted from p. 52 of the March 1983 edition of WORLD PRESS REVIEW.

"Five million acres of land formerly held by whites have been divided among 20,000 families in less than two years. Whites still own 35 percent of all farmland, but this share will fall to 25 percent if the agragrian reform program achieves its objective of granting land rights to 162,000 tenant families by July, 1985. Wages have been increased by 67 percent on farms and up to 70 percent in factories.

"...With the lifting of UN sanctions, a bumper harvest, and a dizzying rise in gold and other metal prices, Zimbabwe reached a record growth rate of 15 percent in 1980. But severe drought, deflation in gold value, and global recession reduced growth to 8 percent in 1981 and to less than 2 percent in 1982.

"...Thirty thousand whites have left Zimbabwe, half going to South Africa. There are many reasons for this exodus. The remaining 170,000 whites represent only 2 percent of its population. Prior to independence they held almost all the civil service jobs; these posts now are being turned over to blacks through an accelerated policy of Africanization, so whites have little future in government. In addition, inflation is 17 percent and incomes of more than $20,000 have been frozen...."

The Selling of Harlem The following is excerpted from page 37 of the March 1983 edition of THE PROGRESSIVE.

"Harlem's city-owned buildings are being sold. In February 1982, the city held a lottery for 13 brownstones. To qualify, a buyer had to earn at least $20,000 a year, so few of the current residents could bid for their homes. But a few did enter, and black politicians persuaded the mayor's office to give residents preferential treatment, allowing their names to be entered in the lottery three times while outsiders could enter only once. Thus, at the only drawing ever held, 60% of the winners were from Harlem.

"...Most of the resident winners are being eliminated because they lack the means to meet repair costs that frequently top $100,000....."

There are several needs which Omaha's Afrikan community has which could be addressed by a radio station. Here are a few:

-There are cultural needs. We need to be exposed to music, plays, poetry, etc. from a wide variety of Afrikan artists, be they American-born, native Afrikan, etc.

-There are educational needs. The public school system has traditionally shortchanged all students, but particularly the non-white and the other poor. Radio could provide tutoring and other forms of supplemental education in a wide area of disciplines.

-We have need for access, both as speakers and listeners, to a public forum. A radio station can provide this access through broadcast of discussions of issues we deem to be of importance to us.

Many other needs exist which can be addressed by a radio station. If they are so addressed, then it can be truly said that we are being served. What happens, though, when a commercial station must choose between a programming decision that will address a community need and one that will please a given purchaser of air time? Ultimately, the commercial station will have to choose the latter out of economic necessity. Without advertisers, a commercial station cannot remain on the air. We must add to this the likelihood that the owners of a commercial station will not be content to merely remain solvent but will want to get a return on their investment, will want to make a profit. And stockholders will want dividends.

These economic realities also would function to dissuade a station from experimenting, particularly with respect to programming. Commercial stations, in order to maintain or achieve desired levels of listenership and concomitant advertising dollars, tend to play it safe and confine themselves to the traditional and accepted(by the commercial media generally) formulae for success. This is one of the reasons why one could catch some Smokey Robinson on KOWH several times in a day and listen for months and never hear anything by Michael Olatunji(considered by many to be Afrika's premiere percussionist).

If, then, it would be difficult for a commercial station to truly serve Afrikan people in Omaha, how could a non-commercial, community-access station fare in this regard? The primary problem that would be faced would be that of funding. Because a non-profit station does not sell air time, it must depend on donations(of money and work), subscriptions, grants, etc. In short, it must depend on community support, not a passive support in the form of people merely listening to its programs, but active support: volunteers to work at the station and organize fund-raisers, people collecting contributions door to door, etc. It must have involvement on the part of community people in making decisions about programming and the other aspects of running a radio station.

As can be readily seen, both the commercial station and the non-commercial/community-access station would face problems, but problems which can be overcome or, at least, adequately coped with. The main problem right now, however, is that there is presently no station serving Afrikan people. Two groups clamor for support in order that a station might become a reality. It is the job of those of us who genuinely care to organize community-wide, public discussions of important issues and give representatives of the two groups opportunities to specifically outline how their proposed ventures would both address the issues and be structured and designed to address them.

An opportunity stands before us by which we can achieve something we sorely need--control over a mass communications medium. We cannot afford to allow the opportunity to escape us.

-Editor

Subscribe to the FLAME. Send a money order for six dollars(cost for one year's subscription) to: HARAMBEE FLAME
Harambee Afrikan Cultural Org.
P.O. Box 2500 Lincoln, Neb.
68502-0500

Submit articles or poetry to David L. Rice/ Editor.

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Note: "Afrikan," as used in the FLAME, generally refers to ancestry rather than place of birth or residence.

IT'S OUR TURN

What happened to the Movement of the 60's? Has it died?
What happened to the protest and the rise of Racial Pride?
Where are the leaders whom we followed, where is their concern?
They won't speak out like years before
They've paid their dues, they've done their chore
They're tired, they can lead no more
And now it's our turn!

With sit-ins, boycotts, marches, we lit fire in the fifties
With SNCC and CORE and Malcolm X, we sizzled in the sixties
But now, those decades past are over, never to return
"We need new leaders," we discuss
We wait to see who'll raise a fuss
The group we're waiting for is us
This time, it's our turn!

When Angela and Stokely rose from college campuses
And Huey organized the streets, they started ruckuses
Young people were the Movement's fuel, young people made it burn
Like Martin King, at twenty six,
Who stamped out Southern busing tricks
Now we're of age, no time for kicks
Let's move, it's our turn!

We are the present leaders of the Movement, people say
Not leaders of tomorrow, but the leaders of today!
Black liberation is our goal, Black Power we must earn
Young people, open up your eyes
We've slept too long, it's time to rise
We must unite and organize
Because it's our turn!

Black Student Unions argue over personalities
At parties we get high and fight for trivialities
Because of apathy the Movement died. When will we learn?
We're leading our race amiss
By sitting back in mindless bliss
Our parents didn't die for this!
Wake up, it's our turn!

They beat us, jailed us, killed us, we can't let them weary us
We are the people's only hope, so let's get serious!
Remember those before you who have died for standing stern
They fought for freedom dusk to dawn
They led us well, but now they're gone
So someone else must carry on
And now, it's our turn.

Doreen Charles